

PRAGMATICS OF CINEMA COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

ARTS 2520

Summer, July 2020



Instructor: Federico Cuatlatl

E-mail: Fc5b@virginia.edu

Office: Ruffin Hall 126

Pre-requisites: SPAN 1060 Accelerated Elementary Spanish; SPAN 2010 Intermediate Spanish
This course will be taught in English, including lectures, presentations, and class discussions. Interaction with filmmakers, local communities, pedagogical material, and getting around Mexico will require competency in Spanish.

Course Description:

Learning about and producing a community film festival in Cholula, Puebla, Mexico offers an experience bringing together cross-cultural discourse in the pragmatics of cinema. This summer study abroad course gives students an introduction to contemporary Latin-American Indigenous Cinema by producing a film festival in the city of Cholula, Puebla which holds a complex history, culture, and indigeneity heritage. In defiance of current political climate vilifying Latinx immigrants often coming from marginalized indigenous communities, the pedagogy covered seeks to amplify a broader understanding of immigration in order to build bridges and not walls. At the core of this course is a direct involvement and hands on work in producing a community film festival in Cholula,

Puebla. The course will emphasize the pragmatics of engagement by involving students directly on the production of the festival, working directly with filmmakers, and working with the local communities. Students will have the opportunity to get involved in the transnational film festival to take place in Charlottesville in the fall of 2020 as well.

Learning Goals and Objectives:

- *Learn the history and culture of Cholula, Puebla in the context of colonization and immigration
- *To conceptualize and produce a film festival through pragmatic community engagements
- *Work with and learn about Mexican Indigenous filmmakers and Indigenous content film
- *Learn about contemporary artists, filmmakers, and film festivals in Mexico and Latin America
- *Design, organize, coordinate, and run an international film festival
- *Learn and celebrate local indigeneity as a core value in the film festival
- *Gain a broader understanding of current immigration issues and indigeneity in Latin America

Readings Assigned:

The Broken Spears – By Miguel Leon-Portilla: to be read and discussed during the two weeks of class
-an indigenous perspective and account of the massacre of Cholula by Hernan Cortes and the Spanish.

Open Veins of Latin America, Part 1: Mankind's Poverty as Consequence of the Wealth of the Land:
Assigned and to be read before arriving in Mexico. Notes based on reading will be expected from each student to have a class discussion on the first day of class.

Relevant content covered and discussed:

Students will engage in the history, cinematography, and culture of indigeneity and immigration issues as it relates to Mexico and Latin America by screening and discussing the following feature-length films:

- Santo Luzbel** – Directed by Miguel Sabido
- Espiral** – Directed by Jorge Perez Solano
- Tirisia** – Directed by Jorge Perez Solano
- El Sueño de Mara'akame** – Directed by Federico Cecchetti

The course will also cover and discuss contemporary Mexican Indigenous filmmakers with a specific focus on the current historic programming of the 2019 International Film Festival of Morelia which brought thriving contemporary female filmmakers from Mexican Indigenous communities.

- ***Tote_Abuelo*** (2019, dir. María Sojob)
- ***Tío Yim*** (2019, dir. Luna Marán)
- ***Siempre andamos caminando*** (2017, dir. Dinazar Urbina Mata)
- ***Gente de mar y viento*** (2016, dir. Ingrid Eunice Fabián González)
- ***Arcángel*** (Dir. Ángeles Cruz, 2018)
- ***Reencuentros: 2051 migrantes*** (2009, dir. Yolanda Cruz)
- ***Kárapani Tsínharhini*** (2018, dir. Magda Cacari)
- ***Rojo*** (2019, dir. María Candelaria Palma Marcelino)
- ***Pox, la bebida sagrada*** (dir. Dolores Santiz)
- ***Yolem Jammut (mujer yoreme)*** (2017, dirs. Iris Belén Villalpando López)

*As a means to engage with local communities and our guest indigenous filmmakers, it will be vital for students to learn about the history, current issues, cultures, and urgencies as related to indigeneity in Mexico and Latin America. This learning process will be through mandatory guided tours to historical sites such as the Forte de Loreto, where important battles took place to liberate Puebla from colonial France. Other relevant and mandatory guided tours will be: the oldest library in the Americas, the Palafoxiana library; the contemporary museum showing relevant current issues in Mexico, the Amparo Museum; and a guided tour to historical pyramid in Cholula. These site visits, film screenings, and discussions will provide scholarly critical engagement for students to work on their assignment and projects. Additionally, this relevant content provides students context in order to understand the local communities that they will engage and work with, as well as gaining a critical understanding of current issues on immigration and indigeneity. These activities and discussions will count towards the overall class grade evaluated as participation and attendance.

Assignments and Projects:

Daily Blogging

Write a brief daily reflection on what you have learned, engaged in, observed, or found compelling from class and other activities.

Contemporary Filmmakers and Indigeneity in Latin America

Two Part Research and Presentation Project:

First Part: 10 – 15 minute powerpoint presentation

Due: July 8th (in-class presentations)

Second Part: 2-page Research Paper

Due: July 13th

Research an independent contemporary filmmaker from Latin America who comes from an indigenous community or someone who is creating indigeneity content film. In a 10 -15 minute powerpoint presentation, you will present to the class the artist that you have researched. Write a 2-page paper on this including but not limited to the following: biography of filmmaker, analysis of their works, relevancy to contemporary issues, indigeneity issues in the Americas, historical relevancies, and/or their contributions to contemporary filmmaking.

Participation, engagement, and direct involvement with the production of the festival will be a vital component of the pedagogy and evaluation of this class. Though there isn't specific assignments or projects on this, students will be expected and encouraged to get involved on all facets of the festival including:

- organizing
- coordinating
- designing
- conceptualizing
- assisting filmmakers
- workshops/activities assistance
- programming
- logistics
- communications

Attendance:

Students will be required to attend all days of this 2-week summer course in order to pass this class. Being on time to daily class meetings and ensuring to attend the entirety of these meetings is required to pass this course. Should urgent matters come up, communicating with the instructor is necessary to anticipate any delayed arrivals, early departures, or absences in order to pass this class.

Contact Hours:

Students will meet daily as a class for fourteen days, 2-3 hours a day. The two weeks of this course will sum up to a total of 40 hours of contact plus working time outside of class. Contact hours will vary each day and will entail the following: lectures, class discussions, work time, viewing films, site visits, assisting artists/filmmakers, and working on days of the festival.

Class Schedule:

**Meet in May for pre-departure assignment, discussions, and anticipation of travels*

-We will meet at the end of the Spring 2020 semester during Finals week (date, time, and location TBA)

-Open Veins of Latin America Part 1 Assigned

-Prepare discussion notes based on this reading for first day of class: questions, observations, comments,

*This class will meet daily for class discussions, conceptualizing, logistical work, screenings & discussions, and working time.

June 28th – Students Arrive in Puebla City

June 29th –Class introduction, Class Dinner

-view films, discuss assigned reading, discuss films, Introduction to history of Puebla and Cholula.

June 30th – Visit Museo Amparo, Palafoxiana Library

July 1st: Visit Forte de Loreto, historical introduction to Puebla, Cholula, and Mexican history

July 2nd – Meet with local festival organizers,

July 3rd – Lecture on contemporary Mexican Indigenous cinematography

July 4th - Press Conference

July 5th – Class relocates to Cholula, Puebla

July 6th – Assign roles, work on logistics. Visit Cholula Pyramid with historical guide

July 7th - Visit local University: Universidad de las Americas. Visit festival venues and sites

July 8th – Work Time

July 9th - Work Time

July 10 : Day of Festival

July 11th - Day of Festival

July 12th – Debriefing meeting, clean up and pack up

July 13th – Leave for Mexico City, Class Dinner

Festival Concept & Design

The festival aims to propose a format that focuses more on engaging with the local communities beyond the screening of films. The films will be screened in unconventional local venues in Cholula to make the festival more inviting and welcoming to an audience who otherwise may see cinema as inaccessible or exclusive. We will collaborate with local efforts and venues to create open and free to the public events. The filmmakers in attendance will be invited to design a workshop or community activity that engages local participants on the pedagogy of cinema learning. Local performance groups such as traditional musicians and indigenous ceremonial groups will also be invited to form a part of the festival.

*2-3 Feature length films will be screened

*8-10 short films will be screened

*2-3 filmmakers will be invited to attend the festival